

QA-587

**Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District
Chester, Queen Anne's County**

Constructed circa 1890 – circa 2000

Private

Located at the western end of Chester, the Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District is a primarily linear district that runs along both Cox Neck Road and Postal Road near their intersection. The district runs south along the east side of Cox Neck Road for approximately one-tenth of a mile, and east along Postal Road on both sides for approximately one-third of a mile. Now almost exclusively commercial, the overwhelming majority of the resources appear to have been constructed as single dwellings. The community is composed of 31 resources – 21 contributing properties and ten non-contributing properties – that display several popular vernacular architectural forms and styles spanning primarily the first half of the twentieth century. No single form or style dominates the district, although a significant number of mid-twentieth-century tract houses in a modified Cape Cod form are present. Non-historic buildings constructed between circa 1960 and circa 2000 are interspersed with the historic buildings.

The historic buildings of the survey district represent a good collection of late nineteenth- to mid-twentieth-century architectural forms and styles found in Queen Anne's County. The district retains its linear pattern of development tied to Postal Road east of the intersection with Cox Neck Road. Early residents were merchants who served travelers along the Centreville to Broad Creek Road (now Maryland Route 18), and local farmers, watermen, and others who lived on Cox Neck Road. The district's buildings reflect the economic growth in this area of Chester from the 1890s (following the substantial growth in the maritime industry), to the completion of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and U.S. Route 50/301 in 1952.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-587

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic

other Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District

2. Location

street and number approx. ¼ mile linear along Postal Road from intersection with Cox Neck Road ___ not for publication

city, town Chester ___ vicinity

county Queen Anne's County

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name various

street and number telephone

city, town state zip code

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. N/A liber folio

city, town tax map tax parcel tax ID number

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
☐ Other: _____

6. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Current Function | Resource Count | |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape | 21 | 10 buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade | 0 | 0 sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | | <input type="checkbox"/> defense | 0 | 0 structures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic | 0 | 0 objects |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> education | 21 | 10 Total |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> funerary | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> government | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> health care | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture | | |
| | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> social | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> unknown | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: | | |
| | | | Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory | |
| | | | 0 | |

7. Description

Inventory No. QA-587

Condition

| | |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> altered |

Summary

Located at the western end of Chester, the Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District is a primarily linear district that runs along both Cox Neck Road and Postal Road near their intersection. The district runs south along the east side of Cox Neck Road for approximately one-tenth of a mile, and east along Postal Road on both sides for approximately one-third of a mile. Now almost exclusively commercial, the overwhelming majority of the resources appear to have been constructed as single dwellings. The community is composed of 31 resources – 21 contributing properties and ten non-contributing properties – that display several popular vernacular architectural forms and styles spanning primarily the first half of the twentieth century. No single form or style dominates the district, although a significant number of mid-twentieth-century tract houses in a modified Cape Cod form are present. Non-historic buildings constructed between circa 1960 and circa 2000 are interspersed with the historic buildings.

Description

Setting/Landscape

The Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District is not formally planned. The buildings that line both streets face the road and are generally set back no more than 100 feet. On the whole, the district displays the density expected of a small town or early suburban community. The landscape is essentially level, with open, grassy lots dotted by mature trees and shrubs. The lots along the east side of Cox Neck Road and the south side of Postal Road back onto wooded areas. The properties on the north side of Postal Road are situated immediately south of U.S. Route 50/301.

Currently, neither Postal Road nor Cox Neck Road are designated federal or state routes. Postal Road, however, was part of Maryland Route 18 until circa 1990, after which the route was re-aligned. Both are wide, asphalt-paved streets. Cox Neck Road is four lanes wide, and Postal Road is three lanes wide, including the center turn lane. Concrete curbs line the roadways. Concrete sidewalks line the south side of Postal Road, while power lines on pine poles run along both sides of the street.

The set-backs of the buildings within the district vary and range between ten and forty feet. Many of the buildings within the district have driveways and parking areas associated with them; these are typically constructed of gravel, asphalt, or concrete. Some of the lots incorporate picket fencing.

Building Patterns, Types, Styles, Materials, & Details

The vast majority of the district's 31 resources are residential in form. Of the resources originally built as single dwellings, all of those on the north side of Postal Road have been converted to commercial use. The houses along Cox Neck Road appear to retain their historic residential function, as do approximately half of those along the south side of Postal Road.

All of the historic resources located in the district are of frame construction, and few display any distinctive architectural styling. Most of the historic buildings in the district stand one- or one-and-one-half stories tall, but several two- and two-and-one-half-story dwellings are located within the district as well.

Five resources, including a circa 1980 open-air shopping center, are purpose-built commercial structures; only one of the purpose-built commercial structures – an automobile repair garage that was constructed circa 1940 – is historic. One church is located within the district. Rebuilt in the 1960s, the one-story, front-gable frame church is clad with brick veneer and features a two-part bell tower.

The oldest dwellings within the district were constructed between 1890 and 1930. Most of these stand two or two-and-one-half stories tall. The houses at 1522 Postal Road and 2738 Cox Neck Road are good examples of I-houses within the district; the house at 2738 incorporates telescoping additions. One four-square house stands within the district and is located at 1617 Postal Road. Two of the

8. Significance

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| Period | Areas of Significance | Check and justify below | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> performing arts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2000- | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> social history |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ | <input type="checkbox"/> maritime history | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ |

Specific dates

Architect/Builder

Construction dates circa 1890 – circa 2000

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Summary Statement of Significance

The historic buildings of the Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District in Chester represent a good collection of late nineteenth- to mid-twentieth-century architectural forms and styles found in Queen Anne's County. The district retains its linear pattern of development tied to Postal Road east of the intersection with Cox Neck Road. Early residents were merchants who served travelers along the Centreville to Broad Creek Road (now Maryland Route 18), and local farmers, watermen and others who lived on Cox Neck Road. The district's buildings reflect the economic growth in this area of Chester from the substantial growth in the maritime industry in the 1890s, to the completion of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and U.S. Route 50/301 in 1952.

Historical Narrative

The Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District in Chester is located on the north and south sides of Postal Road and extends approximately one-third of a mile east from Cox Neck Road. The district also covers an area on the east side of Cox Neck Road south of Postal Road. Historically, Postal Road was part of the Centreville to Broad Creek road, which traversed Queen Anne's County east to west and later became known as Route 18 or Main Street. In the early 1950s, after the construction of U.S. Route 50/301, Route 18 diverged from its historic alignment approximately one-tenth of a mile west of Dominion Road. Within the survey district, Postal Road follows the historic alignment of Route 18. Cox Neck Road follows its historic alignment south through Coxes Neck; by the nineteenth century, the road provided access to and from farms on the peninsula.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the survey district was part of the settlement of Sharktown (see also QA-583, *Dominion Road/Main Street Survey District* and QA-586, *2000 Block of Main Street Survey District*), an area that extended along present day Main Street and Postal Road approximately from Piney Creek on the east to Cox Neck Road on the west, and reached south along Crab Alley Creek Road (now Dominion Road). By 1866, Sharktown included a schoolhouse; the store and residence of Luther W. Bryan along Crab Alley Creek Road; and the stores of Thomas H. Harris and Jacob T. Waters on the north side of Main Street between Crab Alley Creek and Cox Neck Roads. The Harris and Waters stores were located within the survey district, but are no longer extant.¹

The 1877 *Illustrated Atlas of Kent and Queen Anne Counties* depicts the growth of the district area with the addition of Thomas Harris's house, and the dwelling of John Hampton, a farm laborer, located between the Harris store and the Waters store.² Thomas Price, a carpenter, had a home to the east of the Waters store. Benjamin C. Tolson, whose farm was located north of Postal Road and west of Macum Creek, constructed the only building located south of Postal Road in the survey district area; the building was

¹ J.G. Strong's *Map of Queen Anne's County* (n.p.: J.G. Strong, 1866); 1870 U.S. Population Census, Queen Anne's County, Maryland, District 4, Broad Creek Post Office, pp. 19 and 35.

² *An Illustrated Atlas of Kent and Queen Anne Counties, MD* (Philadelphia: Lake, Griffing & Stevenson, 1877).

9. Major Bibliographical References

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See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property N/A
Acreage of historical setting N/A
Quadrangle name Kent Island

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000 (7.5 minute)

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary of the Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District in Chester encloses the district's highest concentration of historic resources. In the parts of the community that have been excluded from the district, non-historic resources exceed the number of historic resources. The boundary line generally follows the rear property line of the resources lining the north and south sides of Postal Road, and extends south along the east side of Cox Neck Road to the southern property boundary of the house at 2736 Cox Neck Road. A local area map (adapted from a base map produced by the Queen Anne's County Department of Planning and Zoning) with the district boundaries demarcated is enclosed with this MIHP form.

11. Form Prepared by

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| name/title | Kathryn Gettings Smith and Gerald M. Maready, Jr., Architectural Historians | | |
| organization | History Matters, LLC | date | December 21, 2007 |
| street & number | 1502 21 st Street, NW, 2 nd Floor | telephone | 202-223-8845 |
| city or town | Washington | state | DC |

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

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pre-1930 houses are one-and-one-half story bungalows. The remaining pre-1930 houses are typically two-story, single-pile dwellings with asymmetrical fenestration on the façade.

All of the dwellings constructed between 1930 and 1957 stand one or one-and-one-half stories tall. Many of these houses display the Cape Cod form; examples include the houses at 2736, 2740, and 2742 Cox Neck Road and the houses at 1515 and 1625 Postal Road. Two of the houses constructed in the 1940s and 1950s are one-story, side-gable houses with projecting front gables.

Alterations & Intrusions

The roads through the Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District have been widened but appear to retain their historic alignments, except at the eastern end, where the intersection of Postal Road and Main Street has been reconfigured. This reconfiguration is the result of the most striking and intrusive alteration to the district and its setting: the construction of U.S. Route 50/301, and its later conversion to a controlled-access, multi-lane highway. As a result, the setting has been significantly altered. The physical collection of resources is still extant within the district, but the changing function of the structures indicates the influence of the adjacent highway. Several historic resources have been removed and replaced with purpose-built commercial structures.

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Resource Inventory / Characteristic Resources:

| Number | Name/Address | Estimated Date of Construction (source) | Brief Physical Description | Contributing (C)? or Non-contributing (NC)? |
|--------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 1 | 2736 Cox Neck Road | 1949 (tax) | 1.5-story, frame, side-gable Cape Cod house with asphalt shingle roof, 2 front-gable dormers, asbestos siding and an enclosed side porch on the south side. | C |
| 2 | 2738 Cox Neck Road | 1897 (tax) | 2-story, frame, side-gable, telescoping house clad with a wood shingle roof and siding. Two interior brick chimneys have corbelled caps. | C |
| 3 | 2740 Cox Neck Road | 1956 (tax) | 1.5-story, frame Cape Cod house with parged foundation and clad in vinyl or metal siding. Center brick chimney has corbelled cap. Large front porch is enclosed with aluminum siding and has a concrete block foundation. Concrete block garage to rear of house. | C |
| 4 | 2742 Cox Neck Road | 1950 (tax) | 1.5-story frame Cape Cod house with an enclosed front porch and center brick chimney. House is clad in aluminum siding. Foundation is concrete block. | C |
| 5 | 1500 Postal Road | 1890 (tax) | 2-story house has a side-gable roof with a centered front gable and centered rear ell. Used as a commercial building. Common bond brick facing on 1 st story; 2 nd story, ell and sides clad in aluminum siding. End interior brick chimney with a corbelled cap. A large, 1-story commercial addition added to the east side has brick facing on a frame structure. | C |
| 6 | 1501 Postal Road | Circa 1970 | Gas Station. | NC |
| 7 | 1508 Postal Road | 1947 (tax) | 1-story, side-gable, frame house with a projecting front gable. Building has a concrete block foundation and is clad in asbestos siding. Interior brick chimney. Side entry. | C |
| 8 | 1509 Postal Road | Circa 1915-20 | 2-story, side-gable, frame double house clad in asbestos shingle siding with a standing-seam metal roof. There is an exterior brick chimney on the west end. Front portico has Colonial Revival arched wood roof supported by wood brackets. 2-story rear ell. | C |
| 9 | 1510 Postal Road | 1992 (tax) | 1-story, 3-bay, side-gable house with vinyl siding. | NC |
| 10 | 1512 Postal Road | 1928 (tax) | 1.5-story, 3-bay bungalow that has side-gable roof with shed dormers. Foundation is rock-faced concrete block piers. 3-bay front porch supported by Tuscan columns. Distinctive diamond 1-light windows on the front and sides. | C |

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| | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 11 | 1514 Postal Road | 1921 (tax) | 2.5-story, 3-bay, side passage, side-gable house with an interior brick chimney and cornice returns. Foundation not visible. House clad in vinyl siding. 1-story rear ell with front-gable roof. 1-story, front-gable frame garage ca. 1930 has a standing-seam metal roof, exposed eaves and vertical weatherboard siding. 2 additional non-historic structures—a shed and a house. | C |
| 12 | 1515 Postal Road | 1950 (tax) | 1.5-story, frame Cape Cod house with a concrete block foundation and clad in aluminum siding. Interior brick chimney has a corbelled cap. Enclosed front-gable front porch. Building used commercially. Contemporary side-gable frame garage. | C |
| 13 | 1518 Postal Road | 1896 (tax) | 2-story, 3-bay, side passage, side-gable house with an interior brick chimney. Foundation not visible. House clad in vinyl siding. 1-story rear ell with front-gable roof. One ca. 1930 shed at rear of lot. | C |
| 14 | 1521 Postal Road | Circa 2000 | 1-story warehouse/retail building. | NC |
| 15 | 1522 Postal Road | 1905 (tax) | 2.5-story I-house with centered front gable and 2 interior-end brick chimneys with corbelled caps. Front porch rebuilt and enclosed. Clad in vinyl siding. Arched 2-over-2 wood sash in front gable. Two 4-light, wood windows in the east side gable. Foundation is not visible. | C |
| 16 | 1539-1575 Postal Road | Circa 1980 | 1-story shopping center. | NC |
| 17 | 1600 Postal Road | 1926 (tax) | 1.5-story, frame bungalow with a rock-faced concrete-block foundation. Enclosed front porch has a replacement pre-fabricated concrete stoop. Shed dormers on front and back. House clad in aluminum siding. 1-story frame garage ca. 1960 with plywood walls and metal roll-up door. | C |
| 18 | 1601 Postal Road | Circa 1940 | 1-story, side-gable commercial structure (C.H. Hay's Auto Care) with shed addition on each side. Square-edged, wood door surrounds and vinyl siding. Façade has 6 bays, including 3 auto bays. | C |
| 19 | 1602 Postal Road | 1890 (tax) | 2-story, 4-bay, frame house with wood box fascia and soffit and with cornice returns. Cladding is aluminum siding. Center brick chimney has corbelled cap. Foundation is not visible. Non-historic frame shed/garage in rear. | C |
| 20 | 1603 Postal Road | Circa 1965 | 2-story, side-gable house with larger rear ell; clad in aluminum siding. | NC |
| 21 | 1604 Postal Road | 1947 (tax) | 1-story, side-gable, frame house with a projecting front gable, concrete-block foundation and aluminum siding. Center brick chimney has a corbelled cap. | C |
| 22 | 1606 Postal Road | Circa 2000 | 2-story, frame commercial building with vinyl siding. | NC |
| 23 | 1607 Postal Road | 1956 (tax) | 1-story frame house in Cape Cod form, substantial alterations. | NC |

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| | | | | |
|----|-------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 24 | 1610 Postal Road | 1946 (tax) | 1.5-story, side-gable, frame house with a concrete block foundation. Shed dormers in both front and back. Side interior brick chimney with corbelled cap. House clad in vinyl siding with replacement windows. Ca. 1960 side-gable addition with separate shed dormer on the east side. Colonial Revival door surround with engaged Tuscan posts and dentilled cornice on the front entry. | C |
| 25 | 1617 Postal Road | 1910 (tax) | 2.5-story, frame, four-square house with an asphalt-shingled hipped roof, and hipped dormers on each elevation. Clad in vinyl siding with replacement windows. Foundation is not visible. Central brick chimney has a corbelled cap. Enclosed porch with standing-seam-metal-clad hipped roof. Large hipped-roof addition on east side. Parking lot to east of house. | C |
| 26 | 1619 Postal Road | 1951 (tax) | 1-story, 1-room building clad in asbestos shingles. Asphalt shingle roof has exposed rafter tails. Symmetrical façade with a door flanked by a 1-over-1 double-hung replacement window. | C |
| 27 | 1623 Postal Road | 1950 (tax) | 1-story, frame house with vinyl siding. Concrete-block foundation has distinctive oval crawl space vents. Windows are 4-over-1, wood, double-hung sash. Projecting enclosed vestibule with a shed roof. Carport addition on the east side. | C |
| 28 | 1625 Postal Road | Circa 1940 | 1.5-story, 3-bay, side-gable, Cape Cod, frame house has asbestos siding with brick facing on the lower part of the wall. Two front-gable dormers have shaped fascias. | C |
| 29 | 110 Union Wesley Circle | Circa 1990 | 1-story, prefabricated house. | NC |
| 30 | 200 Union Wesley Circle | Circa 1967 | Union Wesley United Methodist Church 1-story, front-gable, frame church with brick veneer. Two-part bell tower over the front gable, which has a centered entrance with a Colonial Revival door surround, an oculus window in the gable, and cornice returns. Sides have arched windows with colored glass. 1-story brick additions at the rear. | NC |
| 31 | 120 Wesley Lane | Circa 1970 | 1-story, brick, ranch house. | NC |

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probably a store since Tolson's residence was located on his farm, and Tolson operated a store in Sharktown by 1871.³ William Tanner, a farmer with extensive landholdings east of Cox Neck Road, owned the land south of Postal Road and west of Tolson's store.⁴ In 1878, as church trustees, three African-American men—Alexander Hazelton, Henry Heath, and William H. King—purchased a small parcel of land for a Methodist Episcopal Church; it adjoined Tolson's store and was set back from the south side of Postal Road.⁵ No buildings survive from the earliest period of settlement in the Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District.

Sharktown experienced a substantial period of growth at the end of the nineteenth century, fueled in part by a boom in the maritime industry. In the second half of the nineteenth century, commercial oystering and crabbing increased dramatically; the peak Chesapeake Bay oyster harvests occurred in the 1880s.⁶ This trend particularly affected Kent Island and areas along rivers and creeks, where maritime communities thrived. Located just south of Macum and Piney Creeks off the Chester River and west of Kent Island Narrows, the Sharktown area was home to ship's captains and sailors as well as oystermen. Samuel DeCoursey, a bridge keeper either at Kent Narrows or Coxes Creek, lived on the north side of Main Street at the intersection with Piney Creek Road.⁷ By 1888, after a post office was established, the area was known as Chester.⁸ In 1890, Charles Nash opened an oyster house for shucking and packing oysters at Bryan's Cove in Piney Creek; the oyster house employed local residents.⁹ At the turn of the twentieth century, oystering "still supported a waterman and labor force of thirteen hundred and some ten or more processing plants on or near [Kent] Island... Chester, Dominion, and Stevensville truly are towns built by crabs, fish and oysters—mainly oysters."¹⁰

The construction of the Queen Anne Railroad in 1902 also fueled a period of growth for the Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District. Incorporated in 1894, the railroad initially linked Baltimore and the Atlantic coast by establishing a line from Lewes, Delaware on the Atlantic Ocean to Queenstown, where passengers and freight could be transferred to steamboats headed for Baltimore.¹¹ In 1902, the railroad built a railroad bridge across Kent Narrows, and laid tracks leading west from Queenstown to Love Point on Kent Island.¹² In 1905, the Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia Railroad purchased the Queen Anne Railroad, and built a station north of Main Street in Chester; Dominion Road extended north from Main Street to reach the rail line.¹³

³ "Maryland State Gazette, Queen Anne County," 1871, Maryland Historical Trust Library vertical file FRR QuAn2. Luther W. Bryan, Thomas H. Harris, S.W. Jones, and Benjamin Tolson were the residents listed under Sharktown; all have the occupation of keeping a country store or a general store.

⁴ *Illustrated Atlas*.

⁵ Queen Anne's County Land Records, Liber JW8, Folio 39 (14 February 1878).

⁶ Robert J. Brugger, *Maryland: A Middle Temperament, 1634-1980* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), p. 324.

⁷ 1880 U.S. Population Census, Queen Anne's County, Maryland, District 4, Enumeration District 62, pp. 42.

⁸ "Post Offices: Maryland, Queen Anne's County," *Jim Forte Postal History* (Las Vegas, Nev.: Jim Forte, n.d.), accessed 11 October 2007, <<http://postalhistory.com/postoffices.asp?task=display&state=MD&county=Queen+Annes>>.

⁹ Janet Freedman, *Kent Island: The Land That Once Was Eden* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2002), p. 61.

¹⁰ Reginald V. Truitt, *Kent Island: Maryland's Oldest Settlement* (Stevensville, Md.: Women of Christ Church, 1965), p. 9, as quoted in Freedman, p. 57.

¹¹ "Queen Anne's Railroad," *Delaware Public Archives* (Dover, Del.: Delaware Public Archives, 2007), accessed 25 September 2007, <<http://archives.delaware.gov/markers/sc/QUEEN%20ANNES%20RAILROAD%20SC%20116.shtml>>; Donald G. Shomette, "Kent Narrows Timeline" (Queen Anne's County Heritage Consortium, Chester, Md., 2004, photocopy).

¹² Shomette.

¹³ Freedman, p. 92. In 1924, the Pennsylvania Railroad purchased the rail line and operated it until 1958 when the track between Queenstown and Love Point was abandoned. Charles B. Clark, *The Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia, Vol. II* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., Inc., 1950), pp. 883-884.

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During the maritime and railroad boom periods of the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century, the survey district grew with the addition of structures along the south side of Postal Road and the east side of Cox Neck Road.¹⁴ Several buildings survive from this period. The nineteenth-century dwellings are two-story, three- or four-bay, side-gable frame houses in vernacular styles common in Queen Anne's County.¹⁵ The circa 1890 two-story house at 1500 Postal Road, which features a centered front gable and incorporates several additions, is a commercial building today and may have been a store originally.

The dwellings constructed before 1920 include I-houses and one four-square. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these house forms were common in Queen Anne's County and throughout the United States. The two-and-one-half-story I-house at 1522 Postal Road illustrates the single-pile, side-gabled, I-house form. I-houses generally display a center-hall plan, with two rooms on either side of a central stair hall, a condition reflected in their typically symmetrical facades with a center entry. I-houses often exhibit a rear ell that provided space for the kitchen and other service spaces. In Queen Anne's County, I-houses frequently feature a centered front gable on the façade; this feature is evident on the house at 1522 Postal Road.

The four-square house at 1617 Postal Road is a two-and-one-half-story, hipped-roofed dwelling, with a square footprint, and generally boxy shape. Four-squares generally feature a full-width front porch, wide eaves, and prominent dormers. Typically, the interior plan of a four-square is composed of four rooms on each main floor. The four-square had its genesis in the 1890s, and was popular nationally through the first decades of the twentieth century. Like the I-house, the four-square was a commonly used house form for farmhouses and rural residences. In Queen Anne's County, however, the form seems to be most common in towns such as Chester.

In 1902, local African-Americans began construction of Union Methodist Episcopal Church on the land that they purchased in 1878; it is not known whether this church replaced an earlier church building on the property. The site was located in a predominantly white neighborhood, but was situated between the African-American communities on Dominion Road (see also QA-583) and on Cox Neck Road (see also QA-601 and QA-602).¹⁶ These communities, like the church trustees, included oystermen, farm laborers, and their families.¹⁷ By 1904, the church was completed in its location, set back approximately 300 feet from the south side of Postal Road.¹⁸ The church building underwent major remodeling in the 1960s, then was destroyed by fire in 1967. A cornerstone with the date 1 October 1909 may have been part the earlier church.¹⁹

¹⁴ U.S. Geological Survey, Maptech Historical Topographical Maps, <<http://historical.maptech.com>>, Annapolis, MD Quadrangle (15 Minute Series), 1904.

¹⁵ See houses at 2738 Cox Neck Road, 1518 Postal Road, and 1602 Postal Road.

¹⁶ Bertha Pulley, "Chester," *The Black Arts Festival of Queen Anne's County, Theme: "Black Horizons in Queen Anne's County,"* program (Centreville, Md.: Queen Anne's County Branch, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 10 June 1978), p. 14. "The community of Chester might really be called the communities of Chester; there is Dominion on Route 552, and Coxes Neck, wherein clusters of Blacks [*sic*] dot each small section."

¹⁷ The trustees who signed the deed were farm laborer Alexander Hazelton, and oystermen Henry Heath and William H. King. 1880 U.S. Population Census, Queen Anne's County, Maryland, District 4, Enumeration District 62, pp. 28, 29, and 48.

¹⁸ U.S. Geological Survey, Annapolis, MD Quadrangle (15 Minute Series), 1904.

¹⁹ "The History of Union Wesley United Methodist Church," from the files of the Heritage Coordinator, Queen Anne's County, Chester, Md., photocopy.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-587

Name: Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 3

The 1920s saw improvements in Queen Anne's County roads and continued growth in the town of Chester. In 1921, Postal Road (as part of Route 18) was re-named the Grasonville-Queenstown Pike and was an improved, hard-surface road made of cement.²⁰ In the 1920s, automobiles were beginning to eclipse steamboats and railroads as the primary means of transporting goods in and out of Queen Anne's County, leading to the decline of some communities located near steamboat wharves or along rail lines. However, since Chester lay along an improved road well-suited for automobile traffic, it appears to have been only moderately affected by the demise of the steamboats and the decline in railroad traffic that occurred during the decade.

Constructed in the late 1920s on the south side of Postal Road, the houses at 1512 and 1600 Postal Road illustrate the bungalow form, which was popular in Queen Anne's County and throughout the country in the 1920s and 1930s. A typical bungalow is one- or one-and-one-half stories in height; has a compact, rectilinear footprint; and features a full-width front porch, wide eaves, prominent front and rear dormers, and a low-slung profile. The bungalow had its genesis in the 1890s, and was especially popular nationally in the 1920s and 1930s, when the rate of home ownership drastically increased among the middle and working classes in the United States. Bungalows were designed to be inexpensive to build, and easy to maintain without hired help. Stylistically, the bungalow often displayed some combination of modest Craftsman or Colonial Revival detailing, a characteristic it shared with another popular form of the era, the four-square. Also like four-square houses, bungalows were sometimes purchased from mail-order companies such as Sears, Roebuck and Company, which shipped a kit of construction materials to the local buyer. Chester's proximity to the railroad made it easy to order and receive a house from a catalog, and also to see examples of the latest styles.

In the early 1920s, a separate school building was constructed on the Union Methodist Episcopal Church property. The school for African-American children was likely built with a grant from the Julius Rosenwald Fund, which was established in 1917 by Julius Rosenwald, the president of Sears, Roebuck and Company, to improve education for African-Americans in the rural South.²¹ The school was probably sponsored by the members of the church, since the trustees for the school were often from the same families as the church trustees.²² In 1932, the Supervisor of Colored Schools in Queen Anne's County reported to the Maryland Superintendent

²⁰ Harry C. Rhodes, *Queenstown: The Social History of a Small American Town* (Queenstown, Md.: The Queen Anne Press, 1985), p. 118; Catherine A. Bishop, "Grasonville," typescript (Queen Anne's County, Md.: n.p., [ca. 1935]). The essay is undated, but the topics of discussion indicate that it was written circa 1935.

²¹ "Rosenwald Schools," *The Rosenwald Schools Initiative* (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 456 King Street, Charleston, SC), accessed 27 November 2007, <<http://www.rosenwaldschools.com>>. The school was included in the 1932 report on the Rosenwald schools in the county (see fn.21).

²² "Public Education of Blacks in Queen Anne's County," *The Black Arts Festival of Queen Anne's County, Theme: "Black Horizons in Queen Anne's County,"* program (Centreville, Md.: Queen Anne's County Branch, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 21 April 1979), pp. 7, 9-11; "The History of Union Wesley United Methodist Church."

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-587

Name: Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 4

of Colored Schools on improvements made to the Chester school in observation of Rosenwald Day. The improvements included repairing a walk, whitewashing the outhouses, and planning to paint the building. The school building no longer exists.

The survey district's growth slowed during the Great Depression of the 1930s and during World War II. The end of the war and the completion of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge in 1952 brought a new era of prosperity to this district in Chester. By the 1950s, transportation routes changed with the development of the Bridge, the construction of U.S. Route 50/301, and the decline of the railroad.²³ Although U.S. Route 50/301 bypassed the town, Chester remained a commercial stop along the highway, which was the main west to east route across Kent Island.

From the 1940s through the 1950s, the Cape Cod was the prevalent form for new houses in the district. As American builders ramped up to build large numbers of houses for returning war veterans, they adopted simple house forms that could be built quickly at low cost and could be easily adapted to suit any setting. Two examples of the Cape Cod form in the district are the dwellings at 1515 Postal Road and 1625 Postal Road. This form, which is one-and-a-half stories in height and typically incorporates Colonial Revival details, features a symmetrical façade and dormers that puncture a side-gable roof.

²³ Shomette. The railroad ceased passenger service in 1938 by order of the Maryland Public Service Commission, and freight service terminated in 1958.

Maryland Historical Trust

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Name: Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District
Continuation Sheet

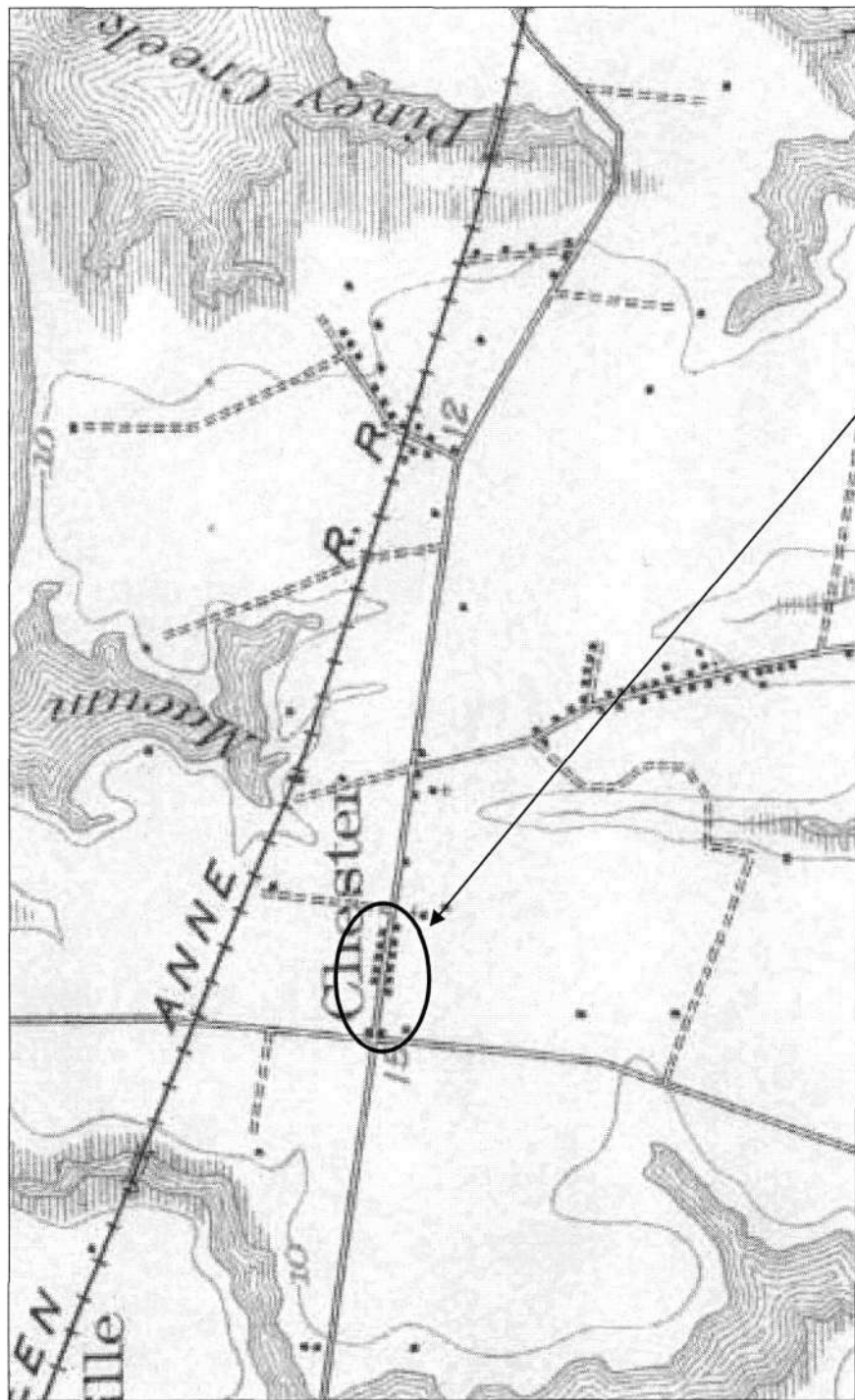
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Illustrated Atlas of Kent and Queen Anne
County, MD (1877)

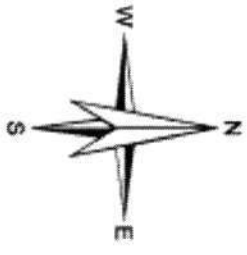
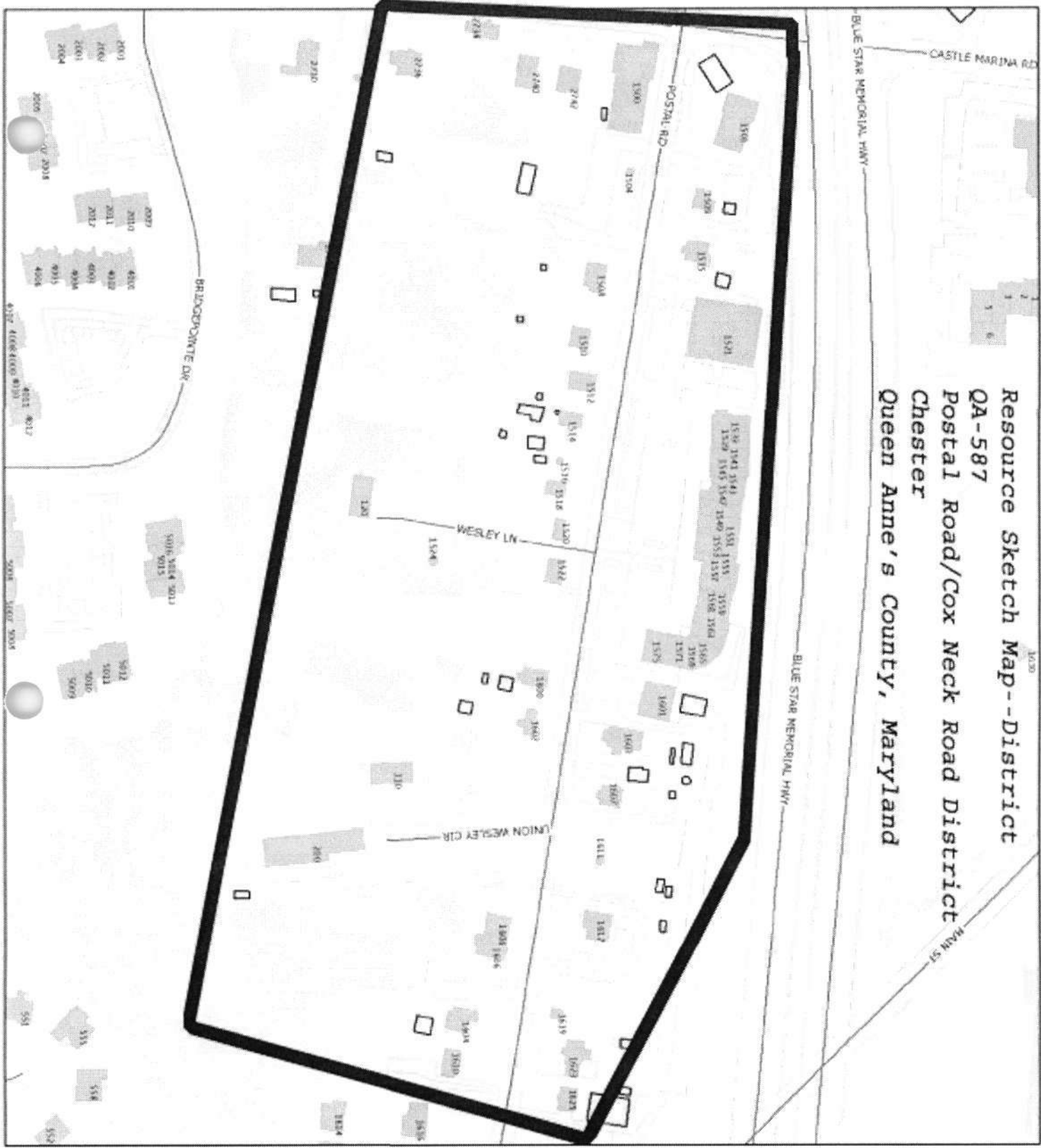


QA-587
Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District
Chester
Queen Anne's County

1904 USGS Map, Annapolis Quadrangle

Approximate Location of Postal
Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District

Resource Sketch Map--District
QA-587
Postal Road/Cox Neck Road District
Chester
Queen Anne's County, Maryland



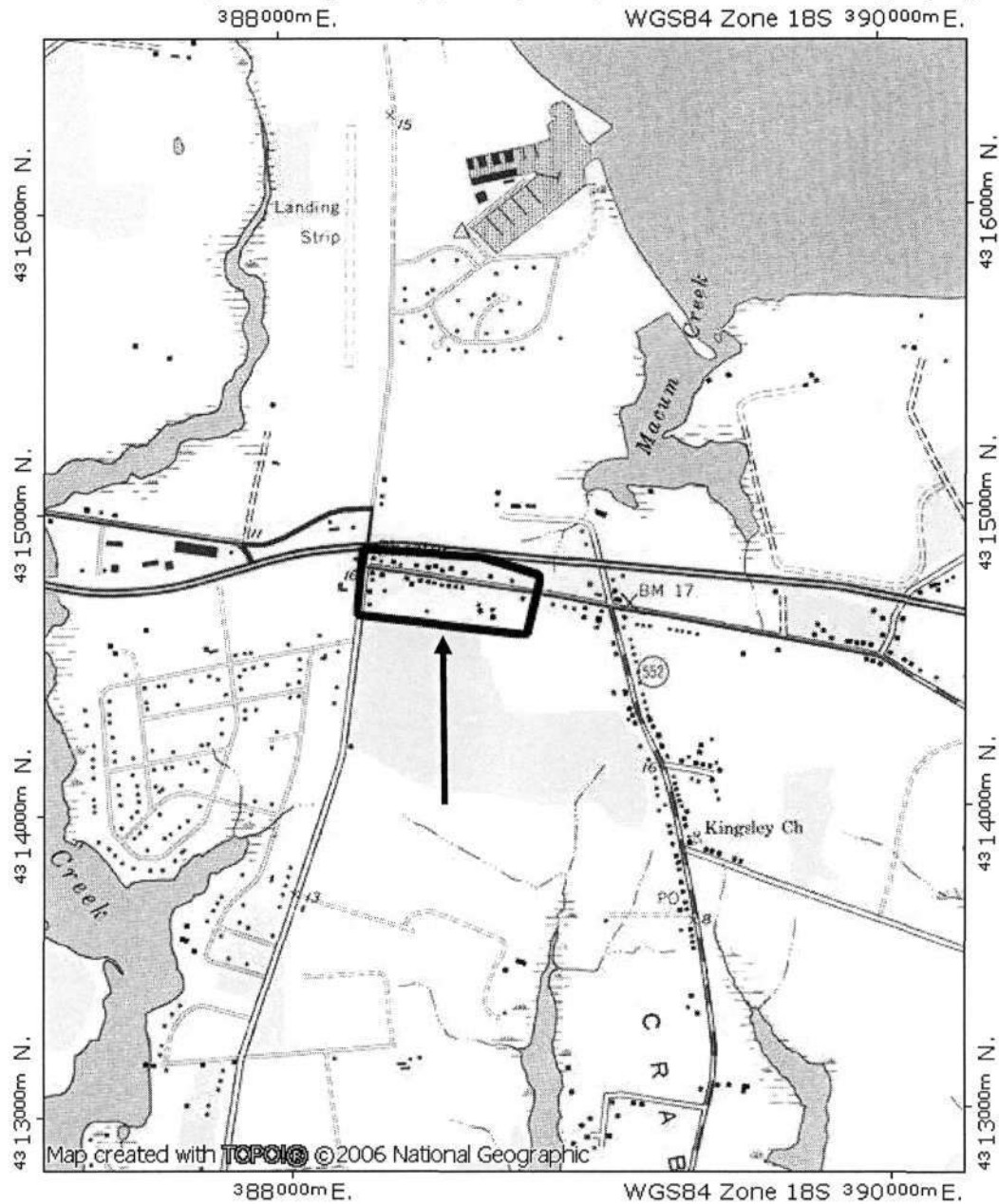
Legend

- ~ Road Centerlines
- Accessable
- Out Buildings
- Forest



Prepared By: Queen Anne's County
Planning and Zoning

USGS Kent Island Quadrangle Map, Maryland, 7.5 Minute Series (Topographic)



QA-587
Postal Road/Cox Neck Road
Survey District

Chester
Queen Anne's County

0.0 0.5 1.0 miles
0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 km

MN T
11°
12/12/07



QA-587

Chester, Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District

1508 Postal Road

Queen Anne's County, MD

History Matters, LLC

4/2007

MD SHPO

Looking SW

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QA-587
Chester, Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District
1509 Postal Road
Queen Anne's County, MD
History Matters, LLC
4/2007
MD SHPO
Facade, looking N
2 of 11



QA-587
Chester, Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District
1512-1518 Postal Road
Queen Anne's County, MD
History Matters LLC
4/2007
MD SHPO
Looking SE
3 of 11



JUNK
REMOVAL
FIRE WOOD
410-643-3404

QA-587

Chester, Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District

1514+1512 Postal Road (left to right)

Queen Anne's County, MD

History.Matters, LLC

4/2007

MD SHPO

Looking SW

4 of 11



BRILLIANT TITLE
B·T·C
CORPORATION

A black and white photograph of a two-story white house with a gabled roof and a front porch. The house has dark shutters on the windows and a small dormer with an arched window. A large tree is on the left, and a utility pole is on the right. A sign in the foreground reads 'BRILLIANT TITLE B·T·C CORPORATION'. The house number '1527' is visible above the porch entrance.

QA-587
Chester, Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District
1522 Postal Road
Queen Anne's County, MD
History Matters, LLC
4/2007
MD SHPO
Facade, looking S
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QA-587
Chester, Postal Road / Cox Neck Road Survey District
1602+1600 Postal Road (left to right)
Queen Anne's County, MD
History Matters, LLC
4/2007
MD SHPO
Looking SW
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QA-587
Chester, Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District
1617 Postal Road
Queen Anne's County, MD
History Matters LLC
4/2007
MD SHPO
Facade, looking N
7 of 11



QA-587

Chester, Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District

1617, 1619 + 1623 Postal Road

Queen Anne's County, MD

History Matters, LLC

4/2007

MD SHPO

Looking NW

8 of 11



QA-587

Chester, Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District
Union Wesley United Methodist Church, 200 Union Wesley Circle
Queen Anne's County, MD

History Matters, LLC

4/2007

MD SHPO

Looking Southwest - Facade

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QA-587

Chester, Postal Road / Cox Neck Road Survey District

1500 Postal Road, Corner of Cox Neck Road + Postal Road

Queen Anne's County, MD

History Matters, LLC

4/2007

MD SHPO

Looking SE

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QA-587

Chester, Postal Road/Cox Neck Road Survey District

2738 Cox Neck Road

Queen Anne's County, MD

History Matters LLC

4/2007

MD SHPO

Looking NE

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